

SPORTS

Lakers start tournament with a bang, defeat Nets 23-17



Cpl. Alisha R. Fitzgerald
Jerod Dunn, guard for the Beaufort Nets, puts up a shot in the lane over a Lakers defender in a 9- to 10-year old boys basketball tournament game at the Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina gym Monday.

CPL. ALISHA R. FITZGERALD
STAFF WRITER

The Lakers defeated the Beaufort Nets 23-17 in round one of the 2004 Marine Corps Community Services-South Carolina Boys 9- to 10-year-old Youth Basketball League Postseason Tournament at the Depot MCCS-SC Gym Monday.

Fueled by uncharacteristic high-percentage shooting from key players, Nick Sirianni, Bryan Tenhopen and Erik Hudson, the Lakers were able to defeat an unfamiliar team and advance to round two of tournament play.

The Nets remained neck-and-neck with the Lakers almost the entire duration of the game, up until the last couple of minutes. The score was tied 15-15 at the end of the third quarter. The Lakers then proceeded to go on an eight to two run. Meanwhile, the Nets continued to get into foul trouble, forcing the Lakers into bonus status. They scored four of their last eight points from the free-throw line.

“They were a little scared at first, I think, having never faced that team before,” said Melanie Hudson, acting head coach for the Lakers. “Those three, [Hudson, Sirianni and Tenhopen], pulled together and motivated the rest of the team.”

The win was a welcomed event, after finishing the regular season on the losing end of the league standings with a 3-5 record.

“I wasn’t as pleased with the boys [at the end of the regular season] as I could’ve been,” said Hudson. “The boys could have played better. They let a lot of games get away from them in the last few minutes, losing by only one or two points. They just wouldn’t play hard all the way through until the end.”

After such notable performance against the Nets, the Lakers seem to have turned over a new leaf in the post season.

“Their overall improvement was huge,” said Hudson. “They played the best I’d seen them play all year.”

The improvement could be attributed to a newfound sense of confi-

dence among the players, according to Hudson. With only two players having played in the league before, it took an entire season of playing for some to become comfortable with their techniques. By the end of the game against the Nets, however, the uneasiness was nonexistent.

“I think the boys really saw that they could win,” said Hudson. “Their confidence built up, and they finally began getting their shots to fall. I always tell them to not stop shooting. I think they wanted it bad this time.”

The desire to win is something that Hudson hopes carries with her players throughout the remainder of the tournament, inevitably turning around the unsatisfying finish they achieved during the regular season.

“I’d like to see them go all the way to the championship,” she said. “They have a good chance if they continue to play like they did [against the Nets].”

The Lakers were scheduled to face the Beaufort Lakers at Laurel Bay Tuesday. The tournament is scheduled to continue through Saturday.

Volleyball: Band 2 burns out against Clothing 25-16, 25-16

CPL. ALISHA R. FITZGERALD
STAFF WRITER

Clothing defeated Band 2 25-16, 25-16 in Tri-Command intramural volleyball action at the Depot’s War Memorial Gym March 3.

The win was Clothing’s first of the season, improving their record to 1-2.

This year’s games are being played in a four-on-four format, just as last year. However, Clothing only had three show up for the game against Band 2. Some players had prior commitments, such as school and duty. The lack of bodies did not seem to slow down the Clothing players in the least as they proceeded to get the better of their opponent in only two matches.

“For the first time this year, we actually played as a team,” said Juan Rosales, Clothing player. “If we play like that, it doesn’t matter how many we have on the floor.”

The win enabled Clothing to tie for third place in the league standings with NDC PI. Though it may still be too early to tell whether or not the placement is actually a foreshadowing of how the season may end up, the Clothing players are optimistic about their ability to move up before all is said and done.

“I think we’ll surely be moving up soon,” said Rosales, who is playing in the league for the first time this year. “We’ll be successful and end up with a winning record.”

Out of the first two games that Clothing lost, one was to last year’s defending champion, Air Station. Although they were beaten, the players were optimistic about the results considering they were going up against a team that has quite an extensive volleyball history.

“We made a lot of unnecessary mistakes,” said Rosales. “We could beat them given the opportunity again. We were

still trying to work out some of our kinks.”

Meanwhile, Band 2 has yet to work out so-called kinks as the players have yet to get a win under their belts. This has not dampened their spirits, however. As the secondary team compiled from the Parris Island Band, the players feel they serve an alternate purpose in the league.

“Band 1 is the competitive team of our unit,” said Band 2 Coach Michael Stanley. “We’re just out here to have fun and boost morale. You always want to find ways to bring people in your unit together. You form work relationships, but this is a way for us to build on personal relationships.”

Despite failing to capitalize over the mismatch in numbers when they faced Clothing and being last in the league standings, the Band 2 players understand that they are unlike other teams in the league. By keeping their pri-

mary function in mind, they are able to remain upbeat, no matter what happens on the court.

“It’s not at all disheartening,” said Stanley. “A lot of teams get together after the games and talk about what they did wrong and how they can do better next time – not us. We leave it all on the court and say, ‘See you tomorrow.’ It’s just a way for us to get together after work.”

Although the Band 2 players never practice and are only concerned with having fun, they came close to defeating their Band counterpart in one of the matches of their first game of the season.

“We had them going for a while,” said Stanley. “But if you ask them, they’ll tell you that they were just trying to make us feel good.”

Band 1 is currently in second place in the standings at 3-1. Air Station and 1stBn. lead the league with perfect records of 3-0.



Cpl. Alisha R. Fitzgerald
Jason Gwinn, Band 2 volleyball player, bumps the ball just as a Clothing player goes up to block it in an intramural volleyball match at the Depot’s War Memorial Gym March 3. Clothing defeated Band 2 25-16, 25-16. The win improved Clothing’s record to 1-2, tied for third in the league with NDC PI.